

NEWS RELEASE



**Covina Police Department
Kim Raney, Chief of Police**

MEDIA CONTACT: Sergeant Ray Marquez
(626)384-5663
or
Sergeant Gregg Peterson
(626) 384-5612

Covina Police Department
(626) 384-5665 - Watch Commander

DATE: December 15, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Police Employee Arrested for Theft of Public Funds

In May, 2011, the Covina Police Department conducted an internal audit of accounts associated with funds accepted at its front desk and parking permit machines located at the police facility and other City parking lots. The audit revealed discrepancies in funds accepted through these sources and deposited at the City's Finance Department.

The Police Department immediately initiated both an administrative and criminal investigation. The primary subject of both investigations was Police Department Records Supervisor, Mary Louise Wasilchin, an employee with the City of Covina since February 1990. She was placed on paid administrative leave on May 5, 2011.

On June 9, 2011, prior to submitting to an Administrative interview, Mary Wasilchin tendered her resignation from her position with the Police Department.

Between May and November, 2011, Police Department investigators poured over thousands of documents in addition to interviewing witnesses from both inside and outside the police department. Investigators also served a multitude of search warrants, including at Wasilchin's home, a rental home and at various banking institutions. The total loss that was determined from the investigation was \$340,000.

In addition to the thefts, investigators discovered that Wasilchin had manipulated the police department's internal standardized process of distribution and filing of a criminal case involving her son-in-law. Her son-in-law had been arrested by the department in May, 2008, for misdemeanor driving under the influence and hit and run.

In late November, 2011, investigators from the Covina Police Department submitted their completed investigation to the Public Integrity Section of the Los Angeles County District Attorneys office for prosecution.

On December 15, 2011, the Los Angeles County District Attorneys office filed one count of Misappropriation of Public Funds and one count of a Public Officer Manipulating a Public Record. All charges were filed as felonies. Additionally, the District Attorneys office filed an enhancement section of the Penal Code that requires an additional two years of incarceration upon conviction because the amount of the theft exceeded two hundred thousand dollars. A motion to examine any bail put forth for Wasilchin's release from custody was also included in the filing.

Pursuant to an arrest warrant issued today, December 15, 2011, detectives located and placed Mary Wasilchin under arrest. Her bail was set at \$360,000 and she was booked at a local custody facility. She is scheduled to be arraigned at Citrus Superior Court in West Covina on Monday, December 19, 2011



Mary Louise Wasilchin
Age 58
Upland, CA.